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BY GEORGE BUSH.

NEW YORK:

JOHN ALLEN, 139 NASSAU STREET.

BOSTON: OTIS CLAPP, 12 SCHOOL STREET.

1846.

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## PROF. BUSH

### IN REPLY TO MR. EMERSON

ON

### S W E D E N B O R G .

[Having announced in the Introduction to the "Swedenborg Library," that the series would embrace the occasional publication of articles and tracts, from different sources, bearing collaterally on the general theme of Swedenborg's doctrines, I have been induced, at the suggestion of several of my friends, to give place to the following Lecture, delivered in the Odeon, at Boston, on the evening of January 16, 1846.\* It was prepared as a reply to Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson's Lecture on Swedenborg, delivered a short time previous, in the same place. Mr. E.'s general estimate of Swedenborg, among the great men of all ages, is evidently very high; and I can most sincerely absolve him, in my own judgment, from all purpose of detracting aught from the superlative merits, as a philosophical seer, which he, in common with many others who have scanned his character without acceding to his revelations, habitually ascribes to him. Indeed, I am confident, that far more justice would be done to Swedenborg's memory, were it generally held in a reverence equal to that of Mr. E. Still, the theological stand-point from which Mr. E. surveys the apostle of the New Church, must inevitably present the whole system of his doctrines and disclosures in a light *toto caelo* different from that in which it is viewed by those who receive it as a veritable *exposé* of the truths of Revelation, and of the facts and phenomena of the other life. The objections which he urges, therefore, are of necessity such as would be prompted by the position he occupies at the entirely opposite pole, not of Swedenborg's sphere only, but of that of every one who yields faith to a divinely dictated Revelation—one written under an *afflatus* utterly and ineffably higher than anything which is to be recognized in the most gifted productions of what some schools would term the *Inspiration of Genius*, than which they apparently know no other.

It may possibly have been deemed more proper that I should meet Mr. E. on his own ground, and endeavor to show, that the very primary principles of his *theosophy*—of which his objections are an outbirth—are unsound. This, however, I have not assumed to do. I care not to enter into transcendental discussions. I propose to encounter his strictures on the humble plane of that common sense and common sentiment which, though doubtless created or modified by the prevalent belief in Christianity as an objective revelation, is yet a fair and competent tribunal before which to try their force. I do not perceive that

\* As all matter of this description will be paged independent of the regular series, it can be bound up separately when the whole is completed.



## PREFATORY REMARKS.

the advocate of great moral truths is called to forsake the vantage-ground afforded him by a rational and satisfactory belief in the religion taught in the Christian Scriptures; especially as he finds its voice one with that of the inner oracles of his own mind.

It is, moreover, proper to remark, that my occasional citations are made from the printed report of Mr. E.'s Lecture, published in a daily paper at the time; and though my own ear enables me to testify to its general correctness, yet it is possible that the actual phraseology of the manuscript might in some cases give a shade to the import of particular expressions, which is not fully preserved in the report. It is but justice to the Lecturer that he should be entitled to the advantage of a hypothetical concession on this ground. I could wish that a running allowance might be made in the mind of the reader for the possibility of a wrong construction of his meaning, yet on the leading points I think there is no mistake.

In view of the circumstances under which the following discourse was prepared—remote from the leisure and quiet of the study, and while passing from place to place in the delivery of a course of Lectures—I might perhaps, if the fact were stated, be justified in giving it more elaboration and finish, and sending it forth to the world as a specimen of what I could have wished to make it in the first instance, but did not. Several of the items would well bear expansion, and some, perhaps, amendment; but I have concluded, on the whole, to give it almost precisely as it was delivered, simply supplying those portions which I was obliged to omit in the delivery from want of time.

I have only to add, as I remarked on the occasion, that cherishing no other personal feelings towards Mr. E. than those of high regard, I shall entertain the hope, that the freedom with which I have reviewed his opinions will not be construed by himself or others in derogation of the sentiments thus distinctly avowed. I have merely spoken as a Christian where I feel as a friend.]

## R E P L Y, &c.

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It would be easy to assign a multitude of causes which go to prevent the intelligent members of the New Church from being surprised to find attention awakened widely and deeply at this day to the character and the claims of Emanuel Swedenborg. They see that it must necessarily be so. If the revelation of which he professes himself the instrument, be indeed of God, the era of its announcement is as much a matter of the divine counsel, as any of the truths involved in it. It is in fact the declaration of a grand event—the Second or Spiritual Advent of the Lord in the glory of the inner truth of his Word—and if this is an occurrence of such august character as to make it impossible for it to escape the notice of the human mind, inquiry must inevitably be awakened, not only as to the event itself, but as to all its most prominent accompaniments. It is not, indeed, to be doubted that the moral and intellectual illumination in which the event in great measure consists, may, for some time, make its way in a silent progress, of the fact and the nature of which the world may be little aware; but eventually the phenomena will begin to be looked upon in their true character, as the effects of some adequate cause; and this cause reflecting men will aim to investigate. What are termed the “signs of the times”—the “genius of the age”—cannot be regarded as vague fortuities—as the chance-medley of Providence—as mere matters that “happen,” no one knows why or wherefore—but they will constitute a legitimate problem to be solved, and minds enlightened and wise will set themselves to solve it.

The ground upon which we anticipate interest and inquiry in regard to Swedenborg, is the twofold fact, first, of the evidence constantly accumulating, and too strong to be resisted, that he is fairly to be enrolled among the most splendid lights of the race on the score simply of his preeminent merits as a philosopher and naturalist. The genius which has penetrated so deeply into the arcana of the physical universe—which has clearly rivalled the scientific sagacity of Newton—the contemplative grandeur of Bacon—the analytic perspicacity of Cuvier—and which has anticipated the most advanced results of the psychology, physiology, and chemistry of the present day, cannot remain permanently in the back ground; and the acknowledgment of his claims in this department will be expedited and enforced by a certain sentiment of indignant justice in view of its having been so long postponed; especially when the fact is recognized of the majestic indifference that he himself evinced to the reception which the world might give to the fruits of his labors. If it is noble to have the giant's strength, and yet beautiful not to use it like a giant, then we may trust that the admiration of the world will finally pay its tribute to the stupendous intellect whose modesty equalled its power, and whose consciousness of might, compared with other men, was continually held in check by the

consciousness of its weakness compared with God. The spectacle is too rare of men's deserving solid fame while not seeking it—of triumphing in every arena without apparently being aware of the presence of spectators—for the laurel to be permanently withheld from the brow which yet does not pant to wear it.

But we have still a second and higher reason for counting upon a growing spirit of inquiry in regard to the character, the true position, and the right estimate of Swedenborg. He has come forward and proffered to the world, in the disclosures he has made, a solution of the moral marvels of the age. He has propounded a clue to the investigation of the hidden purport of the signs and portents that cluster around the era that is now upon us. He has opened the sacrificial beast and bird, and expounded the latent sense and bearings of the symbolic entrails. He has interpreted the lightning on the right and the thunder on the left. His mystic wand has pointed to the clouds and the stars, and shown how the "houses of heaven" are ruling the destinies of earth. In unfigured diction, Swedenborg has broached what we affirm to be the true theory of the moral, religious, and political phenomena of the age in which we live. He has suggested the ample and adequate cause of the astounding effects which are everywhere visible around us. He has professedly put his finger upon the *primum mobile* of the complicated changes that are incessantly transpiring on every side, and while his *exposé* is so plausible—so rational—so philosophical as to command attention, it is at the same time drawn from such a transcendental depth of origin—it flows from a sphere so remote from the ordinary research of the human mind—that the expounder himself becomes one of the problems of the times, and perhaps the greatest of all; as if men should suddenly find the mystic Sphinx to become a more baffling puzzle than the enigma which he propounds. Swedenborg refers all the grand developments which are now swelling to a superb revolution in the state of the world to the passing away of an old dispensation, and the ushering in of a new one. And what is strange enough, the designation of the very event which he assigns as the only sufficient cause of the changes accomplishing, to wit—the occurrence of a judgment in the spiritual world, in the middle of the last century—is cited as a palpable refutation of the soundness of his solution. Although nothing is clearer than the inspired announcement of the founding of a new heaven and a new earth, to be introduced by a stupendous judgment, and though his followers, if you are pleased so to term them, are prepared to show that the prophetic data fix the occurrence of this event to about the time that Swedenborg claims, yet the assertion of this fact is cited as a demonstration of the fatuity of his visions, and the clearest proof of his supernatural insight urged as the cogent conclusion of his being a dupe to the creations of his own disordered fantasy.

After all, however, it is impossible to suppress the speaking testimony of Truth. Candid men will ponder the import of his sayings. They will bring the effects into juxtaposition with the alleged cause; and just in proportion as they find the cause adequate to produce the effects, they will exclaim in wonder, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" Who cannot perceive that spontaneous interrogation must arise as to the endowments of one who has thus been admitted to the secret counsels of the Most High? And who but will expect such claims to encounter the challenge of an unspiritual generation, "Hast

thou entered into the springs of the sea, or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened to thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" From the oracles of his written truths the spirit of the Seer answers, "Yes;" and from the sanctuary of a thousand souls the response is echoed back, "Yes."

It may, then, be somewhat obviously apparent, that the attention of the world will inevitably be drawn to Swedenborg as the professed medium of a new communication opened between heaven and earth; and of this fact the receivers of his doctrines have just the same assurance, that they have of the truth of the doctrines themselves. While, then, they are not at all surprised at any indications looking in this direction, they *would* be surprised if the view taken, and the estimate formed, of his character were not, in a majority of cases, erroneous and distorted in a very high degree. It cannot well be otherwise than that he should at first loom up to view as some vast, strange, misshapen, and non-descript body, appearing on the verge of the horizon, "with fear of change perplexing monarchs"—at least, the monarchs of the theological world. They know not how to interpret the omens of this portentous monstrosity. Whether its visitation is to be baleful or benign, they are at a loss to determine. In the meantime they think it safest for their eyesight to examine his disk through smoked glasses; which, however it may do in looking at the sun, is not the best medium for inspecting an opaque or terrestrial object. Still, the spectacle will be gazed at, and the more the nearer it approaches, as approach it undoubtedly will. But the state of the eye will determine the report of the vision. Swedenborg cannot be viewed apart from his system, and his system cannot be objectively seen aright, without a subjective aptitude for it. He, therefore, becomes himself an exemplification of his great law, that a man's thought is as his affection; for Swedenborg, in the system which he has announced, leaves no man's affection indifferent. He appeals directly to his love, that is, his life, and if the life is not consonant to the tenor of his doctrines, a revulsion ensues which must necessarily express itself by a slighting or contemptuous estimate of the man.

Still, it might be unjust to say, that an internal evil love was always implied by the rejection of Swedenborg's claim to divine revelations. We doubt not many well-meaning and right-aiming souls are incapable of entertaining his assumptions from causes referable to other sources than internal repugnance. Their hearts would side with them if their heads did not falsify their import. Mistaken and prejudiced views of what he has actually taught—strong confirmation in the idea, that intercourse with the spiritual world is all delusion—and an utterly erroneous conceit in regard to the nature of the evidence by which such claims are to be established, often operate to produce a recoil from a system so intensely affirmative as that in question.

At the same time it is not to be disguised, that if the grounds of objection could be thoroughly sifted and analysed, it would be found more frequently true than we suspect, that the objections urged did not lie solely against the religion inculcated by Swedenborg, but against all religion. They would be seen to resolve themselves into the native disrelish of the human heart of that kind of restraint which the tenor of a divine law lays upon the rampant sallying evils of a corrupt will.

These remarks will probably suggest, as they have been suggested by, the recent Lecture of Mr. Emerson—to which I had the opportunity of listening—on the character of Swedenborg. It must be a narrow and bigoted spirit, which would refuse to award its due meed of encomium to the eloquent and brilliant things of such a production. The sparkling point of the sentences—the electric glow of the epigrammatic conceits—the jets of genius continually thrown up, as from a species of intellectual hydraulics in busy operation in the depths of his mind—together with the admirably keen discrimination and masterly portraiture which he evinces—all conspire to throw a charm around his discoursing, to which no cultivated mind can be insensible, notwithstanding the shocks which such an old-fashioned sentiment as that we term *piety* is constantly receiving from the palpable intimations, that the speaker has got entirely beyond the dispensation to which such a sentiment belongs. These intimations can hardly be said to be redeemed by the most splendid rhetorical flourishes, and “jerks of invention,” which abound in his writings; for at the present day the bulk of all popular assemblies will still persist in calling themselves *Christians*, and must therefore halt “infinite leagues” behind the advances of one who has left out of sight the landmarks that divide the realm of revelation from that of the scriptureless evangel of the inner light, which they are at least *afraid* may “lead to bewilder, and dazzle to blind.” While, therefore, they can appreciate the beautiful efflorescences of a gifted mind, yet, under such circumstances, they strike them rather like the night-blooming Cereus, which unfolds its glories amidst the shades of darkness, than like the rose or the tulip, which expand under the genial beams of the sun. They can feel the touch of poetry—they can heed the sayings of philosophy—but they cannot repel the chill which ices their hearts when celestial sanctities are outraged, be the diction ever so silvered, or the figures gathered from the gardens of Paradise itself.

The purpose which I now entertain, of bestowing a critique upon the Lecture alluded to, does not require me to speak solely in the name of the members of the New Church. It could scarcely, I think, have failed to be perceived, that the objections urged against the theology of Swedenborg had a bearing, rather open than latent, against *all* theology, as contradistinguished from a vague theosophy. On this ground all reverent souls must feel that a common cause is made by the attempt to wrest the ark of revelation from the hands of Philistine captors, who would merely return a thank-offering of golden mice and emerods for the splendid spoil. Swedenborg, Samson though he be, is surely the last man whose shoulders are to be loaded with the plucked-up gates of the Gospel Gaza, nor must his eyes only be put out, and his locks shorn, but his very reason also become extinct, before Christianity can make sport in his person for the entertainment of an exulting adversary. Still, the interest of New Churchmen is deeper in the refutation of what we venture to deem and denominate Mr. Emerson’s fallacies, than that of any other class of religionists; and though we may not succeed in convincing others that our estimate of Swedenborg is true, we may yet accomplish something by showing that his is false.

“Swedenborg, or the *Mystic*,” it will be recollected, was the titular announcement of his Lecture. We do not feel authorized to say that this was intended

by the Lecturer as a term of disparagement in application to the subject of his discourse; for it is clear from the scope of his remarks, that the Mystic he portrays is a diviner rather than a visionary—one who looks with illuminated eye upon essences rather than forms—and who grasps by intuition what others infer by experience. And this may doubtless be affirmed, in a certain sense, to be true of Swedenborg. Yet, in the popular vocabulary, *mystic* is so nearly synonymous with *visionary*, and suggests so much more naturally the idea of reverie and dream, than of truth and reason, that we should have welcomed in this connection the clear and pertinent distinction made in Dr. Walker's Lecture, a report of which I find in the very same paper that contains also the report of that upon which I am now commenting. "The sentiment of the Infinite gives birth, therefore, it is impossible to conceal it, to mysticism—true mysticism in contradistinction to false mysticism. False mysticism refuses to know what falls within the scope of knowledge, and presumes to know what is not revealed. True mysticism, on the other hand, acquaints itself with what is positively known, and neither affirms nor denies what is above comprehension; holds no unintelligible language concerning the world of sense, loves and serves the finite, and when the question is about the Infinite, adores and is still. In the English mind, there has long been a suspicion or fastidiousness in respect to true, natural and sober mysticism, which has been unfavorable to rational and sober piety. We must take care not to explain, refine, and rationalize, until there is nothing left but a dead body of divinity."

According to this, there is a mysticism which implies nothing opprobrious, and which would not perhaps be unduly titled were we to term it a higher form of *Christian philosophy*. So far we allow that Swedenborg was a mystic, though we still deprecate the use of a term which, in current acceptation, implies a species of religious castle-building, with clouds for a basis, and rainbows for an ornament. The diploma of a mystic is a quit-claim for any serious demand of common sense, and we shrink from the appropriation to *such an expounder of the Christian mysteries*, the term which would properly designate a dreaming devotee of the religion of Zoroaster or Vishnu.

But, passing this, we come to Mr. E.'s recital of the various monuments of Swedenborg's scientific career, to which he is evidently disposed to do the most ample justice. "No single man can judge of his various works. His wisdom can hardly be estimated. He anticipated modern discoveries in various sciences; in astronomy, the discovery of Herschel; in anatomy, of Monroe, &c. In his edition of the Animal Kingdom, Wilkinson magnanimously lays no stress on his inventions; he was too great to be original. After some further description of the character of his mind, Mr. Emerson went on to show, that those who are best acquainted with his writings are struck with the mass of his powers; he belongs to the Mastodons and Missouriums of literature, who are not to be measured by a whole population of ordinary scholars."

For this concession we are thankful, as for any subordinate agency which the divine providence may see fit to employ to further the higher ends of its wisdom and grace; for we must be allowed the enjoyment of our own belief, that multitudes, in bruiting and blazoning the scientific merits of Swedenborg, are unconsciously pressed into a service of which they little dream. As his endowments in this department were all originally ordered in reference to his

grand ulterior spiritual function, so the fame of them is designed to be wholly overruled to minister to the spiritual ends which are to be promoted by his mission. Men will respect high qualities—they will bow to the supremacy of talent and genius—even Swedenborg's Swedenborgianism will not avail to stifle the homage extorted by the indubitable evidence of pre-eminent powers. And as men are constituted, a profound impression on this score seems requisite to conciliate the regard which would otherwise be kept permanently at bay by the staggering strangeness of his disclosures. The estimate of the system will be governed by the estimate of the man. Minds of a high order will scarcely be attracted to it unless convinced that Swedenborg's also was a mind cast in noble mould; and yet it is plainly designed to come in contact with intellects of the loftiest, as well as the lowest grade. As the truths which Swedenborg has disclosed are not to be enforced by miracles, but to make their way by their own evidence, how shall attention be turned to them—how shall their reputed character for enthusiasm and phantasy be countervailed—except by continually growing proof that they have proceeded from one of the most profoundly philosophical minds that has ever shed abroad its light on the wide field of science? Just in proportion as the testimony increases to the grandeur of his genius, and the solid worth of his discoveries, will be the pressure of the problem, how such a mind could have become the victim of delusion; and just as this inquiry is pursued, will the conviction grow, that it is no delusion at all, but the enunciation of truth and soberness. And thus may we hope for the gradual deepening of the impression, that the views of Christianity held forth by this wonderful man are something more than a mere medley of fantastic dreams and visions—that they are utterances of a gifted messenger of God enlightened by his Spirit.

In making the transition from the scientific to the theological character of Swedenborg, Mr. E. finds himself compelled to make the most serious abatements from the high tone of eulogy which he had thus far employed. While he pronounces him a Mastodon or Missourium of literature, not to be measured by a whole population of ordinary minds, he still presents him, in connection with his religious mission, in a light which goes exceedingly to detract from the estimate that would otherwise be formed of his powers and his labors. He urges a number of objections which, if the grounds of his judgment be admitted as sound, will of course weigh with others just in proportion to the respect conceded by them to the speaker's opinions; and of his claims on this head, as to the general topics of literature and of life, we have no disposition to speak slightlying. Yet we think it would be easy to specify causes on this point which rather go to disqualify him for pronouncing upon Swedenborg precisely that verdict which even-handed equity would dictate. I presume I do no injustice to Mr. E. in saying that he does not believe in the fact of a supernatural revelation being made in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures from God to man;—at least he does not believe it in the sense in which such a character is claimed for the Biblical records by the great mass of Christian men. How, then, can he be prepared to judge otherwise than disparagingly of the mission of one who makes himself known to the world as a divinely authorized expounder of the inner sense and scope—of the hitherto undeveloped *arcana*—of a divine revelation? If he thinks little or nothing of the text, how can he think highly of the commentary or of the commentator?

We see in this the grounds of a reasonable presumption, that Mr. E. would, from the stand-point which he occupies, be but little prepared to appreciate Swedenborg in that peculiar character in which he mainly claims to be regarded. It is obvious that his disadvantage in this respect is far greater than that of the great body of Christians, who unanimously believe in the fact of a revelation having been actually given, though they may not admit of Swedenborg's claim to be its true interpreter. I hope it will not be inferred from this that I deem it impossible that any kind of justice can be done to Swedenborg unless one acknowledges in full his alleged authority. I am merely assigning a reason for the very peculiar unfitness of a mind occupying Mr. E.'s position for viewing his subject in that light in which it strikes the receivers of Swedenborg's doctrine; and the reason also why he would be apt to urge objections that are as repugnant to the sentiments of common Christians, as to those of the members of the New Church. To some of these we shall advert very soon.

A preliminary criticism is made upon what Mr. E. terms the "immense and sandy diffusiveness of his style," resembling it to the arid expanses of the desert. This he says is a feature peculiar to the theological works, and quite unlike to the character of the scientific, which are marked by great terseness and condensation of style. This fact might easily prompt the query, how it happens that the manner is so diverse in the two classes of writings?—how such a change should have been made in his intellectual habits, in a matter where change is generally of as rare occurrence as a change in the style and character of a man's hand-writing, which we know becomes permanent after adult age? How is this to be accounted for, except upon the ground of a special overruling in his case, by which he was led to the adoption of a mode of writing on spiritual themes which Infinite Wisdom saw to be the best on the whole for the purpose had in view—the greatest good of the greatest number. It is undeniable, that, for the major portion of mankind, reiteration of the same ideas under different aspects and varieties of phrase is indispensable, especially when the ideas are new. And this method has doubtless the sanction of Holy Writ, which intimates the necessity of "line upon line," &c., to the ensuring the full effect of the divine teachings. We may judge, therefore, that those who can appreciate the importance of such a mode of imparting great moral truths will not be offended by it. If it is not needful for them, it may be for others; and it deserves to be considered whether the same charge does not lie against the scriptures themselves. Even in so limited a composition as the four Gospels, the same narratives frequently occur, and sometimes with scarcely any variations.

But then Mr. E. remarks, "In spite of its fascination, this diffuseness we cannot quite excuse. It seems the gossip of trifles—a Penny Magazine of the spiritual world!" To this we reply, that nothing in regard to the spiritual world, which is intrinsically *true*, can be trifling. It can only appear so to those who deem his statements a farrago of reveries and phantasies. Let them once assume the character of *absolute verities*, and their triviality instantly disappears. Still, it cannot be affirmed, that all the truths pertaining to the spiritual world are equally important, and an illuminated seer might be said in one sense to be liable to the charge of trifling, if he had dwelt mainly upon

minor details, and omitted the grander. But this cannot be excepted to Swedenborg. His disclosures deal at once with the vast and majestic, and with the minute and humble. There is no violent disproportion between the two. The question, therefore, on this head resolves itself simply into the question of the *absolute truth* of what is alleged. I repeat, if it is *true* it cannot be trifling, and to apply the term "gossip," to a system of disclosures which embodies so much of what Mr. E. expressly allows to be magnificent moral truth, is, to say the least, in very bad keeping with the obvious seriousness of the subject.

In proceeding with his verdict upon the spiritual revelations in question, the Lecturer spoke "of the incongruous mixture of sense and insanity in Swedenborg's theological works. Was ever arithmetic put to such use? The last judgment occurred in 1757; an angel reckoned the joys of the third (first) heaven, and found them to amount to 478." Upon the general charge of *insanity* I shall have more to say by and by; at present, I would consider for a few moments the two items here alluded to, as going to make out a case of *non compos mentis*.

It is usually deemed, I believe, a specimen of unfair reasoning when, merely for effect, one arrays against a serious position, a popular idea in which he does not believe. This is something worse than sophistry—it is downright Jesuitism—it is pure dishonesty. Mr. E. is well aware, that the prevalent notion of a Last Judgment is that of a General Judgment in connection with the physical destruction of the globe—the resurrection of the body—and the personal visible advent of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Now, it is evident from Mr. E.'s Lecture, that he does by no means believe in any such judgment; for he expressly says, that no degree of debasement, sin, or crime, stands in the way of man's advance in the high road to perfection. "With him the tendency is always upward, whether found in'brothels, in prisons, or on the gallows." I quote his own words, though with a sentiment of horror. What room is there for a final judgment, which implies retribution, with a being so circumstanced? It is obvious that it cannot enter his scheme. Where, then, is the fairness of thus playing off a popular belief, to which the objector yields not a particle of assent, against a tenet which he regards as equally idle and vain? Where is the justice of creating odium against a doctrine by setting it in virtual contrast with another doctrine which he rejects from the bottom of his heart? It will require something vastly beyond the utmost beauty and brilliancy of even Mr. E.'s rhetoric, to atone for such a moral obliquity as this.

But let us look at the objection from another point of view. Swedenborg has written a treatise, *De Ultimo Judicio*—Concerning the Last Judgment—a title conveying, in his interpretation, an entirely different idea from that which is understood by the phrase in the current theological diction of Christendom. The word "last" is a relative term, and may imply, according to its connection, a very different meaning. If one were to speak of the *last* census taken in the United States, or the *last* coronation occurring in England, it surely would not necessarily follow that the *last* census *ever to be taken*, or the *last* coronation *ever to happen*, was intended. The expression refers to the past as well as to the future. The ultimate may be, as the schoolmen say, *a parte ante*, as well as *a parte post*. It does not, of itself, signify *final*, but may also as well point to the *last* of a pre-

ceding series. Now Swedenborg teaches that there has actually been such a series of judgments in the spiritual world, at the close of every grand dispensation. Thus there was a judgment at the close of the antediluvian age,—another at the close of the Jewish dispensation—and still another at the winding up of the dispensation which he says came to a close in 1757, and to which he alludes in his treatise before mentioned. This he calls the *last*, not simply as the last that is ever to happen, but also as the last of a preceding series. It is indeed true that he does not recognize any scriptural announcement of another judgment of similar character to be executed upon large masses of men or spirits, but he recognizes the fact of men's living and dying for ages after this event, and consequently of their being individually judged; and he expressly affirms that every man's last day and last judgment occurs at his death. "The last judgment with every one is when the Lord comes, in general as well as in particular. Thus it was the last judgment when the Lord came into the world; it will be the last judgment when He shall come into glory; it is the last judgment when he comes to each man in particular; it is the last judgment with every one when he dies."

A. C. 900.

These remarks will serve at least to put the question in its true light. It becomes simply a question of interpretation—a question whether the Christian world have rightly construed our Lord's predictions in the 24th and 25th of Matthew, of a general judgment at the end of the world, of the whole human race collectively assembled. Swedenborg says not. He affirms that this event was not to occur in the natural, but in the spiritual world, though its effects were to be preeminently manifested in the natural world, and hence all the magnificent results which have occurred in the moral, intellectual, and political world subsequent to the middle of the last century, are to be traced to the influence of this stupendous movement in the spiritual world. And we venture to affirm, in accordance with this, that the soundest canons of Biblical criticism bring us to the same result. For as to a judgment at the end of the world, what becomes of it when we find that the Scriptures contain no intimations of any end of the world but what are flatly contradicted by the most express declarations of its perpetuity. If any man relies upon the letter of the Word to sustain the theory of the physical *finale* of the globe which we inhabit, he is not at liberty to reject the letter when we adduce its testimony directly to the contrary. What can be more express than the following:—"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, *but the earth abideth forever.*" Eccl. 1., 4. "Who laid the foundations of the earth, *that it should not be removed forever.*" Ps. 104., 5.

If there is no end of the world, in the popular sense, revealed, there is no judgment at the end of the world; and yet a judgment—a last judgment—is unequivocally announced in the sacred page. What then is the irresistible inference? Must it not be of course in the spiritual world, and must it not necessarily be of such a nature as Swedenborg has described?

"Concerning the last judgment, it is believed that the Lord will then appear in the clouds of heaven with the angels in glory, and awaken from the sepulchres all who have ever lived since the beginning of creation, clothing their souls with bodies; and when they are thus summoned together, that he will judge them, those who have done well, to eternal life or heaven, those who

have done ill, to eternal death, or hell. The churches derive this belief from the sense of the letter of the Word, nor could it be removed, so long as men did not know that there is a spiritual sense within everything which is related in the literal sense of the Word, and that that sense is the Essential Word, to which the sense of the letter serves for a foundation and a basis, and that without such a letter *as it has*, the Word could not have been Divine, or have served in heaven, as in the world, for the doctrine of life and faith, and for conjunction. He therefore who is acquainted with the spiritual things, to which the natural expressions of the Word correspond, has the power of knowing that by the Lord's advent in the clouds of heaven, is not to be understood that He will thus appear, but that He will appear in the Word; for the Lord is the Word, because He is the Divine Truth; the clouds of heaven in which He is to come, are the sense of the letter of the Word, and the Glory is its spiritual sense; the angels are the heaven from which He will appear, and moreover they are the Lord as to Divine Truths. Hence the meaning of these words is now evident, namely, that when the end of the church is, the Lord will reveal the spiritual sense of the Word, and thus the Divine Truth, such as it is in itself; therefore that this is the sign that the last judgment is at hand. That the last judgment must be in the spiritual world, and not in the natural world, will be seen further in what is to follow. In the previous articles it has been shown, that heaven and hell are from mankind, and that all who were ever born men since the beginning of creation, and are deceased, are either in heaven or in hell, and that therefore they are all assembled *in the spiritual world* [ibi]: but in the articles which follow it comes to be shown that the last judgment has already been accomplished.

“ And moreover, no one is judged from the natural man, or therefore during the life in the natural world, for man is then in a natural body: but every one is judged in the spiritual man, and therefore when he comes into the spiritual world, for man is then in a spiritual body. It is the spiritual in man which is judged, but not the natural, for no blame or criminality can be imputed to it, since it does not live of itself, but is only the servant, and passive instrument of the spiritual man. [See n. 24.] Hence also it is, that judgment is effected upon men when they have put off their natural, and put on their spiritual bodies. In the spiritual body moreover, man appears such as he is with respect to love and faith, for every one in the spiritual world is the effigy of his own love, not only as regards the face and the body, but even as regards the speech and the actions. Hence it is, that the true qualities of all are known, and their instantaneous separation effected, whenever the Lord pleases. From what has been said it is plain, that judgment is effected in the spiritual world, but not in the natural world, or on the earth.

“ That the natural life in man has no efficiency, but his spiritual life in the natural, since what is natural, of itself is void of life; and that the life which appears in it, is from the life of the spiritual man, and that therefore it is the spiritual man who is judged; and moreover that being judged according to deeds, means that man's spiritual is judged, may be seen in the work on HEAVEN and HELL, in the article headed, That man after death is such as his life in the world has been, n. 470 to 484.” *Last Judgment*, n. 28—31.

However adverse then it may be to the common creeds and convictions of

the Christian church, we are, as we conceive, absolutely shut up to Swedenborg's construction of this great doctrine of Judgment. It is a spiritual judgment in the spiritual world, of which we behold on earth, not the process, but the effects.\* At the same time we are well aware that no man can easily accede to this view, who does not accede to Swedenborg's disclosures of the relation subsisting between the spiritual and the natural sphere, nor is it likely that he can ever fully apprehend this without a prior conviction of the reality of his supernatural insight. The evidence of this it is not here in place to discuss. Let it be weighed in candor and patience, and it will compel assent, and he that ponders it deeply will find, to his surprise, that in being initiated into the genuine doctrines of the Word, he is at the same time let into the true philosophy of the Universe. Enough, however, I trust has been said to evince that the effort to make incredible or ridiculous the assertion of the last judgment in 1757, is abortive.

But what shall we make of the angelic arithmetic applied to the enumeration of celestial joys? Let me quote the passage which gives occasion to this sarcastic fling. In a chapter of surpassing interest on the nature of heaven and heavenly joy, he says;—“A certain angel, in recounting only the most universal genera of the joys of spirits, or of the first heaven, reckoned them up to about 478 in number; hence it may be concluded how innumerable are the less universal genera, and how innumerable are the species belonging to each genera; and if this be the case in the first heaven, what are we to suppose concerning the indefinite genera of felicity in the heaven of angelic spirits, and especially in the heaven of angels,” i. e., of those whom he terms angels *par eminence*.

Now the question may surely be propounded whether there is any thing so outrageously extravagant in this representation. Would a man be deemed to have taken leave of his senses if he should undertake to recount, in this general manner, some of the principal sources of the intellectual and moral pleasures which are opened to us by the beneficence of the Creator in the present life? Suppose he were to begin with Love in its genuine import, under which we know to be included the various specific forms of Conjugal Love, Parental Love, Filial Love, Love of Friends, Love of Country, Love of Home, &c. Here is one genus including a large list of subordinate species. So he might go on and designate Hope, Pity, Generosity, Benevolence, Justice, Gratitude, Knowledge, Taste, and a multitude of other leading affections and emotions of our nature, which would come into the general category of mental and moral pleasures in the present world. Suppose that in cursorily running over the list he should for a definite purpose specify a particular number—twenty, thirty, forty—of the more universal or comprehensive of these principles. Would it justly be deemed absurd? Why then, may not a similar enumeration in heaven be held free from the charge of wildness or puerility?

In what immediately follows, when compared with the sequel, it is not easy to determine whether the Lecturer designs the language of censure or of praise.

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\* For a masterly and convincing view of the evidence on this head, I would refer the reader to Noble's Appeal, § IV.

"Another important doctrine of Swedenborg is that of representatives. In one of his works he announced that he should treat of things as symbols and types, and show that the physical was but a symbol of the spiritual world. This announcement was made before his illumination, and it is by far the most remarkable of his doctrines. Mr. Emerson did not mean that it was new; humanity is not new, and it is as new and as old as thought. Poetry discovered it; it is implied in language; Lord Bacon hinted it. But not in literature has any one made a scientific statement of it, before Swedenborg. He was a seer of such vast vision, that things opaque and dense became transparent as glass; he saw through nature from side to side, and beheld things in their right order and series. And this, not so much from any peculiar power, as from his favorable position. The poles of his eyes were perfectly adjusted and corresponded to the axis of the world. \* \* \* His thought reached the essence, it did not stop with resemblance. He saw things in law, not in form; like nebulae, that have not been resolved into stars. He habitually proceeded from the innermost to the outward." He clearly accords to Swedenborg the credit of having read in all the visible forms of the material universe a symbolical language, and of having been the first to embody in scientific form the principles of Correspondence which dimly floated through the minds of Plato, Bacon, and all the great lights of the ages. He has redeemed from poetry, and fixed in the domain of reason and science, the superb doctrine, that the natural is merely the transparent veil of the spiritual, and that the mountain, the tree, the meadow, the ocean, the rock, and the rill, are truly the characters in which a divine legend is written, that not so much he that runneth, as he that sitteth, i. e., he that museth, is capable to read.

To all this the man of the New Church assents, for it was one of the first lessons in the school in which he has entered himself; and he would not perhaps, find it easy to point to a more luminous display, in succinct form, than Mr. E. has given of the fundamental philosophy of the Spiritual Sense of the Word. "Seeing a symbolical meaning in things, he devoted his latter years to unlocking from the literal, the involved or spiritual sense. He saw that the most ancient people perceived that things are representative, and discovered at once their meaning; as in reading a book, the eye does not fall on single letters but seizes the whole word. The cause of the harmony throughout the world is the correspondence of things and thoughts. Organized forms always have affinity with the end for which they are intended. Thus he declares that man, in general and in particular, is an organized justice and gratitude. What shall we say of these ideas? 'Was never such a problem offered to criticism, where the merits are so many and yet where such grave deductions are felt and made.' But the main position is obvious enough, and we have simply to ask of the Lecturer—yea or nay—whether Swedenborg has uttered truth on this head? He has broached a doctrine of the deepest transcendental stamp, which, if true, is alone sufficient to elevate him to the very highest pinnacle of philosophical renown. Is it true? Will it stand the test? If it is true in philosophy, is it false in its theological applications? Yet it is the assertion of this very principle which, in the world's repute, has branded Swedenborg with the name of mystic and visionary. The laurel which flourishes green upon his brow in the Academy, withers the moment he stands within the precincts of the Church.

Is this the verdict of impartial justice? In the name of Reason, and Science, and Philosophy, show us the grounds on which Truth ceases to be Truth by the simple enlargement of its sphere. I speak advisedly when I say, that all the objections of any weight urged against Swedenborg as a Spiritual Seer, rest upon averments which are merely the carrying out to its legitimate results of the very principle, the assertion of which crowns him as the arch-hierophant of nature's mysteries, and writes "*Excelsior*" on his escutcheon, even when the sages of all times stand by his side. Where, then, is the consistency of denying his superlative merit on the very ground on which it is, in the same breath, admiringly proclaimed? Can the perfection of wisdom be the basis of a charge of the consummation of folly? Yet to this complexion it comes at last, if Swedenborg's developments of the Spiritual sense of Revelation be rejected. He cannot be a driveller in expounding the sanctities of the Word, and at the same time a sublime diviner in enucleating the problems of creation, if he bring the same principles to the solution of each.

But still graver abatement is made from the value of the system on the score of its lacking what the Lecturer terms a "central spontaneity." "It is essentially dynamic, and fails in the power of generating individuality. There is no individuality in it. The universe is a gigantic crystal; all its atoms and lamina lie in unbroken order and series, but there is no life. The order is perfect, but it is the order of a mill and penitentiary. It makes individuals mere tools, and bereaves every agent of all character. The universe suffers under a magnetic sleep, and only reflects the mind of the magnetiser. Every thought comes forth only by the presence of a society of spirits which surround it. The forms of ships, trees, and men, depend upon the minds which see them."

What shall we say to this? As to the lack of "central spontaneity," it would seem that the burden of his objection would more properly require him to have said that the system lacked "spontaneity" in the *circumference* rather than at the *centre*; for God is at the centre, and if his all-pervading life and energy absorb the individual, so far from a lack of *central* spontaneity, there is little or none anywhere else. But perhaps I may not have apprehended the true scope of the phrase. By "central spontaneity" he may have meant the personal spontaneity of the individual; at any rate I am disposed to look at the objection on a broader ground. It is one which can be duly appreciated in the light of the very truth against which it is arrayed. The assailant is thoroughly explored from the windows of the fortress he would fain attack. It is not indeed capable of denial that Swedenborg makes every man, angel, and devil in the universe, momentarily dependent on the Deity for his life. In fact, there is no created life, whether angelic, human, animal, or vegetable. Life is not an object of creation. It is perpetual influx from the uncreated and sempiternal source of Life, the self-existent and infinite *Esse*, or Absolute Being. What is created are the receptacles of life. This is the great underlying law of existence. And this law must of course be held responsible for all just consequences that flow from it. One of these consequences undoubtedly is, that the universe cannot by any possibility be detached from its Author and live, any more than the human body can be detached from the human soul and live. Still it is a part of this very constitution of being that every human creature should *feel* and *act* as if he had life in himself, notwithstanding his reason is

bound to recognize that this feeling is a fallacy; and this fact is clearly taught by the Apostle when he says that every man is to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, *knowing* that it is God that worketh in him to will and to do of his good pleasure." This principle is inseparable from the theology of every religious creed. Whether we can gain a perfectly distinct idea of the manner in which this dependence is reconcilable with the freedom of the creature, is immaterial. Reason assures us of the one truth, and consciousness of the other. We *feel* that we are free—we *know* that we are dependent. "It is impossible," says Swedenborg, "for any angel or spirit to have any life, unless he be in some society, and thus in the harmony of many, a society being nothing but the harmony of many; for there can be no such thing as life in an individual unconnected with the life of others; nay, it is impossible for any angel, or spirit, or society, to have any life, that is, to be affected with good, to will, to be affected with truth, or to think, unless he have conjunction by several of his society with heaven, and with the world of spirits. The case is the same in respect to mankind. No one could think, or live a moment, unless he had conjunction with heaven and the world of spirits, through the society in which he is."

If, then, all life is the influx of the Deity into recipient forms, it really matters not to the agency of the individual whether it is received through intermediate vehicles, or whether it comes to him by immediate communication. The acting will of man does not move the muscles of his body, except by the medium of the nerves, and the nervous influence. But the ultimate functions of the muscles are accomplished as truly and as well as though the mind acted directly upon them. So although it is ordained that man shall be reached by the divine influx conveyed through mediums, yet there is in reality, as every one may see, no more infraction of his essential liberty or individuality, than if it came to him and acted upon him by immediate impulse.

The truth is, the objection is one that confronts the facts of the most familiar experience. There is no man living who is not continually acted upon by foreign influences, radiated from a thousand sources, and which mar one's individuality just as much as the mediate influx complained of in Swedenborg's system. Mr. E. objects, that in this system "Every thought comes forth only by the presence of a society of spirits." Very well; is it not so? Has Mr. E. ever had a thought "come forth" to which some man's spirit, living or dead, has not contributed a degree of formative influence? A man's book is a form of his spirit, and whether one reads Shakespeare, Milton, Montaigne, Goethe, or Carlyle, he is continually, though unconsciously, moulded by the secret plastic energy of their thoughts and affections, and by no possibility can he escape the all-pervasive operation of this great law. But will Mr. E. admit, that this spiritual influx breaks down his own individuality? Does it magnetize or mirrorize his own mind so that he reflects only the mind of others? Is he not himself, even while the poets, the orators, the philosophers, the proverbialists, the Brahmins, Confucius, and countless others, are speaking in him, like so many winds waking up the mystic tones of the Memnonian statue?

I must, therefore, be allowed to say, that I am unable to perceive the force of the objection, except so far as it lies not against any particular feature of

Swedenborg's scheme, but against the very essential and fundamental law of the universe of being. It is virtually objecting, that a watch can have no individuality because it cannot subsist as a watch without the perpetual presence of that motory force which it received originally from the hand of the artist. In other words, it is of no use for a man to be a man, unless he can at the same time be God. "All we are his offspring," is entirely too humble a strain for us; "all we are himself," is the style in which we would feign celebrate our apotheosis. The truth is, Mr. Emerson has here broached an objection, which when traced to its last analysis will be found to contain the seedling of all sin—the germ of all apostacy—the core of all disobedience—the nucleus of all depravity. Every evil in the universe is to be traced ultimately to the practical denial of the great principle of dependent life.

And here let me advert for a moment to Swedenborg's actual teaching on this subject, which will show that he himself did not regard his doctrine as adverse to the sense or the fact of human individuality. In descanting upon the constitution of things in the universe, and especially upon aggregate forms, he remarks: "The form makes a one so much the more perfectly in proportion as the things which enter into it are distinct from each other, and, nevertheless, unite. On this subject I have frequently conversed with the angels, who said that this is an arcanum which the wise among them perceive clearly, but the less wise obscurely: that, nevertheless, it is a truth, that a form is so much the more perfect in proportion as the things which constitute it are distinct from each other, but still united in a particular manner. They confirmed this by reference to the societies in the heavens, which taken together constitute the form of heaven: and to the angels of each society, of which it may be affirmed, that the more any individual has a distinct identity of character, in which he freely acts, the more perfect is the form of the society."—*D. P.*, 4. From this it is evident that on Swedenborg's principles the assertion of the great laws of dependent life, which necessitates a certain unity of created things, does not vacate the law of conscious individuality and freedom. Indeed, the closer is this union, when morally concordant, the more complete is the individuality of each particular part. So in any piece of mechanism of human fabric, the more perfect is every distinct part, as a part, the more perfect—the more of a one—is the whole. The more perfect is a mortise and its tenon—or the screw and its groove—the more perfect is the structure as a one.

We may judge from this how much real ground Mr. E. has for the intimation that Swedenborg makes the universe "a universe of water pipes," implying that it is a system of mechanical in-flowing and out-flowing from one conductor to another, without any independent spontaneity. If he insist upon the comparison, we might reasonably inquire what would be the consequence if the pipes were to declare themselves independent of the reservoir? We should have a case in which the body aquatic would present very nearly the condition of the body politic, in Roman history, when the Consul Menenius related to the disaffected multitude, gathered on the Mons Sacer, the apologue of the quarrel between the trunk and the limbs.

But Mr. E. proceeds: "The thousand-fold relations of men are not there; that endless alternation in nature by which right by becoming wrong, and wrong by becoming right, offer a defence against all dogmatism and classifica-

tion. The law by which we become strong by our vices, and paralysed by our virtues is never recognized." And well it is that it is not. Swedenborg might have recognized all the laws in the universe without recognizing one that makes men strong by vice and weak by virtue; and as to the "thousand-fold relations" of men, which go to transmute the moral qualities of actions, and "by which right becomes wrong and wrong right," we can only say of it, in the language of the prophet, "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as potter's clay." We admit no such libel upon the righteous ways of Providence. The laws of the divine empire know no accommodation to the shifting phases of human relations, nor will they hold fellowship with the falsities of a social or commercial code which often sanctifies as right whatever may favor the ends of a perverse self-interest. An instant condemnation from all good men would await a system which should thus confound eternal distinctions, and make the violation of law one of the modes of its legitimate working.

But we are told, that "all his spirits are of the same class and stamp. His interlocutors all Swedenborgise. Whoever he meets in the other world, to this they come at last. King George II., Hans Sloan, Isaac Newton, all speak alike. Only when Cicero comes by, he hesitates, modestly says it is one whom he was given to believe was Cicero, but when the Roman opens his mouth, all Rome and eloquence have flown away, and we hear a plain Swedenborgian orator." To this our reply is brief. Swedenborg professes to give the actual truth of things in the other life, and to speak according to that truth; and it would certainly be strange if the inhabitants of that world should speak any otherwise. They must speak according to Swedenborg, if Swedenborg speaks according to truth. But Cicero, it seems, has lost all his eloquence, and becomes a plain Swedenborgian orator. And what would Mr. Emerson expect from Cicero in the spirit-world? Would he expect to hear him haranguing against Cataline, or denouncing the extortions of Verres, and the drunkenness of Marc Antony, or advocating the passage of the Manilian Law? Cicero in the world to come will not reflect so much the Cicero of the Forum, as the Cicero of Tusculum, who wrote on the Nature of the Gods, and pondered on the Immortality of the Soul. It will be no great stretch for him to Swedenborgise then, as he came very near to doing it here when he exclaimed, "O præclarum illum diem," &c. (O glorious day when I shall go to meet that divine assembly, &c.) On the whole, I think we may safely say, that the spirits of departed sages in that world of veritable vision will be quite as apt to *Swedenborgise* as to *Emersonise*.

"Mr. Emerson then went on to speak of a peculiarity of Swedenborg's writings, common to all men of keen moral insight, a peculiar delight in shadows and gloom. Bacon has spoken of the tendency of religious minds to dwell with intenser pleasure on the afflictions of Job than on the glory of Solomon. Indeed, a bird does not more naturally build its nest, or a mole dig into the ground, than this seer plunges into the darkness of the lower world. He was continually seeing new hells—he was let down into the abyss and heard the lamentations, and saw the torments, of the damned; he saw the hell of the assassins, the lascivious, the robbers, the revengeful and deceitful." Upon this I am constrained to say, that the judgment pronounced is not sustained by

fact. I have no hesitation to affirm, that the verdict of unbiassed readers will be, that his prevailing tone is eminently genial, bland, joyous, and cheerful—that nothing like a morbid gust in detailing infernal horrors can be detected in his writings. Though compelled, by the very nature of his office, to develope the realities of the world of wo, yet *heaven* is clearly the element in which his spirit lives, and which he is most delightedly full in unfolding. This I admit is a point which is not so easily made out by an argumentative process. It must be determined by an appeal to the judgment of the reader; but there is some proof of our position in the fact that in his Treatise on Heaven and Hell, which in the common edition consists of 356 pages, only thirty-seven at the farthest are devoted to the hells. But even this would probably be thirty-seven too many to one who should happen to regard the state itself as a nonentity. For there are some subjects on which, to some minds, “a little more than a little is by much too much.” This would doubtless be the case in regard to the present theme with one who sets aside so peremptorily the *bona fide* existence of devils. If there are no devils, there are of course no hells: and to a person of this faith all description must needs savor of the “Inferno” gloom. Mr. Emerson is peculiarly emphatic as to the nonentity of “embodied malignities.” “To affirm their existence is a species of atheism—the last profanation. Goodness and being are one.” What shall be done with a class of assertions that do not so much confound our reason, as contradict the report of our very senses? Do not “malignities” exist in bodily form and verity in the present world? We can only fail to see them by closing our eyes. If, then, there are “embodied malignities” in this world, why should there not be “disembodied malignities” in the other world? Where is the philosophy that would teach us that death, which is merely laying aside the covering of the material body, has the power of subverting, demolishing, and breaking to pieces the very frame-work of our nature? And where is the theology which would teach us that God will be any more opposed to sin thousands or millions of years hence than he is now? Is his nature ever to change? One would think he had had a sufficiently long time in the eternity that is past to banish evil from his universe if it were consistent ever to do it. Let a man’s unbiassed reason, then, pronounce upon the doctrine of Swedenborg as contrasted with that of the following paragraph: “Swedenborg admits no return for the sinful spirit. At death its condition is fixed and final. If man were an azote, or a salt, or an alkali, he might never change, and it would be best that he should not. But he is a spirit and is never stationary. Must and lees will work themselves clear, carrion in the sun will purify itself and turn into flowers and clover, and with man, wherever he is found, in brothels, in prisons, or on the gallows, the tendency is always upward.”(!) If this is so, then all reason is a delusion, and all religion a mockery.

“It was a saying of Locke,” remarks Mr. E., “that God, when He makes the prophet, does not unmake the man; and Swedenborg confirms and illustrates the remark. The disputes of the Swedish Church, the contests between the faith of Luther and Melancthon, or between faith alone and works alone, are infused into the celestial societies. Swedenborg was a Lutheran bishop’s son, he sees his faith symbolically pictured everywhere, and remains, with all his greatness, still a Lutheran bishop’s son. This same theological bias vitiates

other parts of his system." Here, again, we must meet a *pro* by a *con*—a positive assertion by a positive denial. There is nothing more wonderful in the influence exerted upon Swedenborg's mind, than his complete emancipation from the dogmas of the Lutheran and every other church but the church in the heavens. How came the Lutheran church to pursue himself and his doctrines with such violent persecution, if he were all the time putting their tenets into the lips of angels, and thus clothing them with the authority of heaven? But the contests between faith alone and works alone are infused into the celestial societies. And if there *are* celestial societies, why should not the very essential principles involved in the issue of man's salvation, be a theme of converse among them? These are not points peculiar to the Swedish or Lutheran church, but they enter into the vitalities of all religion—they constitute the conditions of eternal life—and no one can reject the idea of their being an element of angelic converse, without inwardly holding that they are mere idle breath and empty puerilities in any part of the universe.

Again, "Mr. E. would object to his cardinal doctrine, that evils should be shunned as sins; he thought it more true and beautiful to say that they should be shunned as evils. The possibilities of man are so vast that he has nothing to do with past evils, but must press forward. His doctrine, too, that the world is a system of ends and uses, although true, is partial. This Dutch universe, this perfect mill, deliver us from this, say our young people. The world does not exist to make husbands and wives, or earthly or heavenly housekeepers." Evils to be shunned as evils, and not as sins. A great principle is here involved, and one that strikes at the root of all moral conduct. The truth is, evil is evil because it is sin, and it is sin because it is an infraction of the eternal order of the universe. It derives its character from its contrariety to the divine nature, and if it is really shunned at all it must be under a recognition of its true and essential quality. The essence of evil is the love of self in some of its thousand-fold forms, in opposition to the love of God; and in this love and its consequent evils man is, previous to regeneration, so totally immersed that he does not inwardly act from any other principle; and the attempt to shun evil simply as evil, is like the attempt to run away from himself, or to jump over his own shadow in the light of the moon. The testimony which I am about to adduce on this head I know is humiliating, but it will be much easier to deny than to disprove its truth. "As to what concerns the dominion of the regenerate man over lusts, it is to be known, that they are in the greatest error, and by no means regenerate, who believe that they can of themselves have dominion over evils; for man is nothing but evil, he is a congeries of evils, and his whole will is mere evil: this is what is said in Gen. viii. 20. 'The fashion of the heart of man is evil from his childhood.' It has been shown me by lively experience, that a man and a spirit, yea, an angel, considered in himself, that is, all his proprium, is the vilest offal, and that left to himself he would breathe nothing but hatred, revenge, cruelty, and the most foul adulteries; these things are his proprium, and his will. This may appear to every reflecting person only from this, that man when he is born, is the vilest living thing amongst all wild beasts; and when he grows up, and is left to his own government, unless he were prevented by external restraints, which are of the law, and by restraints which he lays upon himself in order to be the greatest and

richest, he would rush headlong into all wickedness, and would not rest until he had subdued all in the universe, and had amassed to himself the wealth of all, nor would he spare any but those who submitted themselves as vile slaves. Such is the nature of every man, though he does not perceive it by reason of his inability to accomplish his evil purposes, and of the impossibility of their accomplishment; nevertheless, if he had ability, and possibility, and all restraints were removed, he would rush headlong as far as he had power. Beasts are not at all such; they are born to a certain order of nature; such as are wild and rapacious commit violence on others, but it is only for the sake of preserving themselves; and that they devour others, to appease hunger, which being appeased, they cease to do harm: but it is altogether otherwise with man. Hence it appears what the proprium of man is, and what is his will. Man then being such and so great evil and pollution, it is evident that he can never of himself have dominion over evil: it is altogether a contradiction to suppose that evil can have dominion over evil, and not only over evil, but also over hell, for every man has communication with hell by means of evil spirits, whereby the evil which is in him is excited: from these considerations every one may know, and he who is of a sound mind may conclude, that it is the Lord alone who has dominion over evil in man, and over hell which is with man. That evil may be subdued in man, that is, hell, which is every moment attempting to rush in upon man, and to destroy him eternally, man is regenerated by the Lord, and is gifted with a new will, which is conscience, by which the Lord alone operates all that is good. These things are of faith, viz., that man is nothing else but evil; and that all good is from the Lord; wherefore man ought not only to know, but also to acknowledge and believe them: if he does not acknowledge and believe them in the life of the body, in another life it is shown him by living evidence."—*A. C.*, 987. How, then, can a man really shun evils, except as sins, unless it be by substituting one class for another?—or, as an old divine has it, "turning out black devils, and taking in white ones."

But cannot a man see an evil to be an evil and abstain from it as such? Cannot the inebriate see the evils of intemperance and forsake them as such? Analyse the process of reformation and see what it implies. The man acts from reason and the influx of certain truths into his understanding. *Why* shall he abandon his cups? Because it degrades, impoverishes, brutifies its victim, and entails wretchedness upon himself and his family? *Why* shall he shun his vice on this account? *Why* shall he shrink from debasing himself? Because it is plainly contrary to the end and design of his being. But *why* is it wrong to go counter to the end of our being? Because that end is the expression of the will of God—or rather an emanation of the nature of God, to which the phrase "divine order," is but an equivalent, and to contravene this is *sin*. Here, then, we have the ultimate standard. Here is the fundamental ground of the obligation to shun evil. It is to be shunned not merely for its consequences, but for itself. The mere abstaining from evil as evil, does not necessarily imply any interior repudiation, aversion, or abhorrence of the evil in itself; and what moral value does any man attach to a refraining from evil simply because of the dread of penal issues that it draws after it? Yet we are told that it is preferable to say that we are to shun evils as evils, than to shun

them as sins. That is, it is better to keep clear of harm on the principles that govern the beasts of the field than upon those that befit the intelligence of a man ; for the ox, the horse, the dog, instinctively shun evils as evils.

Let this be arrayed by the side of Swedenborg's teachings on the same subject. In the treatise on the " Doctrine of Life," under the proposition that " It is not possible for any not to shun evils as sins, so that he may hold them inwardly in aversion, except by combats against them," he says, " It must appear plain to every one, both from the Word and from doctrine thence derived, that the proprium, or self-hood, of man, is evil from his birth, and that it is in consequence of this that he loves evils, from an innate concupiscence, and is hurried on to the very commission of them, from a desire to revenge, to defraud, to defame, and to commit adultery ; and in case that he does not think that they are sins, and resist them on that account, he commits them as often as opportunity offers, and when his interest and reputation are not endangered. Man, moreover, yields to the influence of these evils with a feeling of delight, when there is nothing of the nature of religion within him. Inasmuch as this proprium, or self-hood, of man, constitutes the first root of his life, it is evident what sort of a tree man would become, if that root were not to be extirpated, and a new one implanted ; he would be a rotten tree, of which it is said, that it is to be cut down and cast into the fire, Matt. iii. 10, chap. vii., 19. This root is not removed, and a new one implanted in its stead, unless man regards the evils, which constitute the root, as destructive to his soul, and is on that account desirous of removing them ; but inasmuch as they appertain to his proprium, and are consequently delightful to him, he cannot effect their removal but with a degree of unwillingness, and of struggle against them, and thus of combat. Every one who believes that there is a hell and a heaven, and that heaven is eternal felicity, and that hell is eternal infelicity ; and who believes, further, that they who commit evil go to hell, and they who do good, to heaven, is brought into a state of combat ; and he who is in combat, acts from an interior principle, and in opposition to that concupiscence which constitutes the root of evil ; for whosoever is engaged in combat against any thing, does not will or desire that thing, and to have concupiscence is to will and desire. Hence it is evident that the root of evil can only be removed by combat against it. So far, therefore, as any one fights against evil, and thereby removes it, so far good succeeds in its place, and, by virtue of good, so far as he views evil in the face, and then sees it to be infernal and horrible : and having made this discovery, he not only shuns it, but also holds it in aversion, and at length abominates it. The man who fights against evils, must needs fight as from himself ; otherwise he does not fight, but stands like an automaton, seeing nothing and doing nothing ; in which state, from the evil in which he is, he continually thinks in favor of evil, and not against it. But still it is well to be attended to, that the Lord alone fights in man against evils, and that it only appears to man as if he fought of himself, and that the Lord is willing it should so appear, inasmuch as without such appearance there could be no combat, and consequently no reformation."

—*D. L.*, 92—96.

Again, under the proposition that " If any one shuns evils for any other reason than because they are sins, he does not shun them, but only prevents their appearing before the eyes of the world," he remarks, " There are moral men who

keep the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue, being guilty neither of theft, nor of blasphemy, nor of revenge, nor of adultery ; and such of them as persuade themselves that such things are evil, because they are hurtful to the common good of the state, and thereby contrary to the laws of humanity, also live in the exercise of charity, sincerity, justice, and chastity. But if they practise these goods, and shun those evils, only because they are evils, and not at the same time because they are sins, they are still merely natural men ; and with merely natural men the root of evil remains ingrafted, and is not removed ; wherefore the good actions which they perform are not good, because they proceed from themselves. It is possible for the natural moral man to appear before men in the world altogether like the spiritual moral man, but not before the angels in heaven ; for before the angels in heaven, if he be principled in what is good, he appears as an image of wood, and if he be principled in what is true, as an image of marble, in which is no life : but it is otherwise with the spiritual moral man : for the natural moral man is externally moral, and the spiritual moral man is internally moral, and what is external without what is internal is not alive : it lives indeed, but not the life which is called life. The concupiscences of evil, which form the interiors of man from his birth, are not removed but by the Lord alone : for the Lord enters by influx from what is spiritual into what is natural, whereas man of himself flows-in from what is natural into what is spiritual ; and this influx is contrary to order, and does not operate upon concupiscences to the removal of them, but incloses or shuts them in closer and closer in proportion as it confirms itself : and whereas hereditary evil thus lies concealed and shut up, after death, when man becomes a spirit, it bursts the covering within which it was concealed in the world, and breaks out, like the corruption of an 'ulcer which had only been superficially healed. There are various and manifold causes operating to render man moral in an external form ; but if be not also moral in an internal form, he is still not moral ; as for example ; if a person abstains from adultery and whoredom through fear of the civil law and its penalties ; or through fear of losing his reputation, and consequently his prospects of worldly advancement ; or through fear of diseases which may be thereby contracted ; or through fear of family broils, and the disturbance of his private tranquility ; or through fear of revenge from the husband or relatives ; or from poverty or avarice ; or from weakness occasioned either by disease, or by excess, or by age, or by impotence ; yea, if he abstains from those evils from any natural or moral law, and not at the same time from a spiritual law, he is still inwardly an adulterer and whoremonger ; for he nevertheless believes that those evils are not sins, and consequently he does not make them unlawful in his spirit before God ; and thus in spirit he commits them, although not before the world in the body ; wherefore after death, when he becomes a spirit, he speaks openly in favor of them. Hence it is evident, that a wicked person may shun evils as being hurtful, but that none but a Christian can shun them as being sinful."—*D. L. 108—111.*

Yet we are seriously assured that man is to shun evils as evils, only ; and that as to sins he has too much to do in this world to think of them, or feel compunction for them ; thus striking at the root of all repentance : and not only so, but that in all circumstances—in the commission of all crimes—he is still advancing to perfection ! Assuredly it must appear that there are some trains of

reasoning in which, while in point of logical argument the mountain brings forth a mouse, yet in point of mischief, the mouse brings forth a mountain.

But it is a grand derogation from the system of Swedenborg that it insists so much on the *doctrine of uses*. The world is ordered in reference to ends of *use*. The kingdom of heaven is a *kingdom of uses*. This Mr. E. evidently regards as a principle of sordid utilitarianism which cannot be admitted into our conceptions of the divine administration. It makes too much of a working-day, instead of a holiday, world of ours. It takes off from our ideas of the dignity of man, and even of the resources of the Creator—as if he could not *afford* to bring into being a creature who should dwell at ease—who should luxuriate in the simple sense of existence—who should have little else to do than to echo the delighted exclamation of the child running about in the glee and the glad-someness of his heart, “What a funny thing it is to be alive!” It would seem that he would think more highly of being loosed from the bondage of service—from the grievous burden of duty—from the law even, of beneficence, because it is a *law*; as all *law* is regarded as a kind of clog upon the noble spontaneity of the soul.

Now I can proffer no better commentary on all this than to lay down, from the writings of Swedenborg, the great fundamental principle of use as seated primarily in the Lord himself, and then exhibit its applications in the range of created being. In the treatise on the “Divine Love and Wisdom,” where it is shown that “the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom cannot but be and exist in others created from itself,” we are told that “It is the very essence of love not to love itself, but to love others, and to be joined to them by love: it is also an essential of love to be loved by others, for thus conjunction is effected. The essence of all love consists in conjunction, yea, the life of it, which is called delight, pleasantness, enjoyment, sweetness, beatitude, happiness and felicity. Love consists in this, that its own may be another’s, and that it may feel his delight as delight in itself; this is to love; but to feel one’s delight in another, and not the other’s in one’s self, is not to love; for this is to love one’s self, but that is to love the neighbor. These two kinds of love are diametrically opposite to each other. Both indeed conjoin; and it does not appear, that to love one’s own, that is, one’s self in another, disjoins; when yet it so disjoins, that as much as any one has thus loved another, so much does he afterwards have him in hatred; for that conjunction is successively dissolved by itself, and then the love becomes hatred in a similar degree.

“Who cannot see this, that can look into the essence of love? For what is it for one to love himself alone, and not any one out of himself, by whom he may be loved again? this is rather dissolution than conjunction: the conjunction of love is from reciprocation, and there is no reciprocal in one’s self alone; if there is thought to be any, it is from an imaginary reciprocal in others. Hence it is manifest, that the divine love cannot but be and exist in others, whom it loves, and by whom it is loved; for when it is such in all love, it will be in the greatest degree, that is, infinitely, in love itself.

“With respect to God, it is not possible that He can love and be reciprocally loved by others, in whom there is anything of the infinite, or anything of the essence and life of love in itself, or anything of the Divine: for if any thing of the infinite, or of the essence and life of love in itself, that is, anything of the

Divine, were in them, then it would not be loved by others, but would love it-self; for the infinite or the Divine is one; if this were in others, it would be Being itself, and would be the very love of self, of which none at all can be in God; for this is altogether opposite to the divine essence: wherefore, it must be in others, in whom there is nothing of the Divine in itself. That it is in those who are created from the Divine, will be seen below. But that it may be, there must be infinite wisdom, which shall make one with infinite love; that is, there must be the divine love of divine wisdom, and the divine wisdom of divine love. On the perception and knowledge of this secret depend the perception and knowledge of all things of existence or creation, also of all things of subsistence or preservation by God."—*D. L. & W.* 45—50.

Here we have the fundamental principle to which the doctrine of *use* is to be referred. The operation of the same principle in the derivative sphere of created being, is laid open in the extracts that follow:

"With respect to use, the case is this; that they who are in charity, that is, in love towards their neighbor, from which love is delight in pleasures which is living delight, do not regard the enjoyment of pleasures except for the sake of use; for charity is no charity unless there be works of charity, inasmuch as charity consists in exercise, or use; he who loves his neighbor as himself, never perceives the delight of charity except in the exercise thereof, or in use, wherefore a life of charity is a life of uses; such is the life of the whole heaven, for the kingdom of the Lord, because it is a kingdom of mutual love, is a kingdom of uses: therefore every pleasure, which is from charity, receives its delight from use, and the more distinguished the use is, so much the greater is the delight; hence it is that the angels receive happiness from the Lord, according to the essence and quality of use. This is the case with every pleasure, that the more distinguished its use is, so much the greater is its delight; as, merely for example, the delight of conjugal love, inasmuch as thence is the seminary of human society, and from that seminary the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, which is the most important of all uses, therefore so great a delight is in it, that, as was said, it is a heavenly happiness. The case is similar with respect to other pleasures, but with a difference according to the excellence of their uses, which uses are so manifold, that they can scarcely be arranged into genera and species: nevertheless each of them regards the kingdom of the Lord, or the Lord, some more nearly and directly, others more remotely and obliquely. Hence it may appear, that all pleasures are allowed to man, but for the sake of use, and that thus from the use in which they are, with a difference, they partake of and derive life from celestial happiness.—*A. C.* 997.

"That so many various things in man act as one, is because there is not any thing there which does not do something for the common weal, and perform a use. The whole performs use to its parts, and the parts perform use to the whole, for the whole is from the parts, and the parts constitute the whole: wherefore they provide for each other, they have respect to each other, and are conjoined in such a form, that all and each have reference to the whole and its good. Hence it is that they act as one. Similar are the consociations in the heavens; they are conjoined there according to uses in a similar form; wherefore those who do not perform use to the whole, are cast out of heaven, because they are things heterogeneous. To perform use, is to will well to others

for the sake of the common good; and not to perform use, is to will well to others, not for the sake of the common good, but for the sake of self. The latter are those who love themselves above all things; but the former are those who love the Lord above all things. Hence it is, that those who are in heaven act as one, but this not from themselves, but from the Lord; for they regard Him as the only One from whom [all things are], and his kingdom as the whole, which is to be regarded.”—*H. & H.* 64.

This will be an adequate reply to the objection, though I regret that my limits forbid a somewhat further expansion of this sublime doctrine of Use, which is nowhere unfolded as it is Swedenborg.—As to the purpose of making earthly or heavenly house keepers, if it is not beneath the dignity of man to labor to procure a house, it can scarcely be inconsistent with the vocation or mission of woman to train herself to keep it. It is a form of use which will certainly be no detriment to her celestial lot, though she should find there no parlors to be dusted, nor curtains to be hung, nor tables to be spread.

“ The lecturer proceeded to consider the question, daily increasing in interest with regard to this wonderful man—has he a right to a literal reception of his visions? They may be true for him, true subjectively, but can they be received as facts? He gave Swedenborg credit for his great powers, his wonderful penetration into the moral world, and his comprehensiveness of mind, and nothing was more easy than to accept the moral of his revelations, and let the pictures and the fable go.” Here is, doubtless, the grand solution in regard to the phenomena presented in the case of Swedenborg. His visions were the bodying forth of his own vivid conceptions. They were the clothing of sublime speculations in living forms. There was a strange commingling of abstract truths with the co-existing spectres of his fancy. We are therefore called upon to discriminate between the phantasy and the fact—the fable and the moral. We may take the moral, and reject the fable. As it is ridiculous to suppose that storks, peacocks, foxes, and elephants, really confabulate with each other according to the literal verity of Esop, while yet a truthful lesson is conveyed by the fiction, so while the supposition is utterly absurd that spirits and angels actually conversed as Swedenborg represents, and the idea may be confidently rejected; yet after this abatement is made, the residuum of a great moral truth or doctrine remains, which may be safely and profitably retained. And here the concession comes in of a great poetical genius in Swedenborg, of which we are very suspicious, in the light in which it is made, inasmuch as it is designed to detract just so much from his supernatural endowments as it yields to his natural; although even on this ground we would fain be informed where a poet has ever become so much the dupe of his fancy, as to imagine that his mental creations were real entities. Milton and Dante have given superb pictures of Heaven and Hell; but has any one supposed that they mistook them for realities?

But in reference to this whole theory we scruple not to say that it is perfectly inadequate, unphilosophical, unreasonable. In the first place, it is clearly opposed to all legitimate conclusions drawn from the character, the life, and the known mental habitudes of the man. Though we do not disclaim for Swedenborg the possession, if you please, of a somewhat rich imagination, yet nothing is more obvious than that his was a mind of the most rigidly logical and mathe-

matical order. All his early life was devoted to the exact sciences, and the magnificent monuments which he has left behind him in this department, could never have been achieved except by one who had preeminently the power of holding the imaginative faculty in abeyance. He tells us expressly, and his works prove it, that he made experiment and mathematics the polar stars of his inquiries; and mystics and visionaries do not deal in geometry and fluxions. The evidence is demonstrative that in all the grand requisites of a philosopher, he was upon a par with Newton and Bacon, and there is just as much ground for charging upon them a native preponderance of fancy, as for charging it upon Swedenborg, prior to his theological career.

But if this element cannot be detected in his mental constitution previous to the period of his entrance upon his alleged religious mission, how, secondly, shall we account for the *suddenness* of the change; for if his biography is to be believed, the transition was made in a single day. How will psychology explain this, if there was no latent leaning or bias to mysticism discoverable before? Yet the annals of his life do not disclose it, nor was the sphere of his calling likely to produce or foster it. He was not a cloistered recluse—a musing solitaire—but a practical man of the world. He was a business functionary of the government, and a great traveller. Everything about him—in his studies and his habits—was adverse to the development of that trait which is so often appealed to, as affording the solution of the problem of his visions. Yet here is a transformation of the whole man, as sudden and about as wonderful as if he had been in a moment invested with wings, while no rational account is proffered of the marvel.

But thirdly, we pronounce the theory utterly inadequate, from the intrinsic character and genius of the revelations, as viewed in themselves. This is such that we confidently affirm that nothing but the admission of their truth will account for them. Every other explanation leaves the mind utterly overwhelmed by the inexplicable difficulties that cluster around them. It is wholly inconceivable that embodied fancies—fictitious visionings—should involve such a vast amount of obvious truth, and should in fact continually refer themselves to fundamental laws and principles of our being, which the conscious reason recognizes as beyond the reach of doubt. Why this is not more generally conceded is because the true character of the system is not more generally known. To those who have thoroughly acquainted themselves with it, no inward assurance is more absolute than that what Swedenborg affirms of the conditions of existence in the other life is true, because it is authenticated and echoed by the intuitions within. So far from seeing ground to question his statements, they cannot even *conceive the possibility* of the facts being otherwise than as he represents them. For they perceive it to be merely the legitimate results—the consistent carrying out—of the elemental principles which are revealed to them by consciousness, and with which the divine oracles, in their true state, must necessarily agree.

Why then should they doubt about the *bona fide* reality and verity of the revelations, when they know the certainty of the principles on which they rest? And what will objections weigh when made, as objections usually are, by those who have not examined as they have examined? They know that they have carefully investigated, and put every position to the test of their calmest judg-

ment, and it has stood the test. They cannot be reasoned or ridiculed out of the consciousness that they have dealt fairly with evidence; and as they feel entitled to presume upon their competency to judge of rational matters, upon rational grounds, the bare intimation that such sublime disclosures are the ravings of a distempered brain, or the splendid embodyings of deep abstractions, strikes them as ineffably more incredible than the strangest of the visions can the unbeliever.

But I am forced to close at a point from which I would gladly take a new departure, and expatriate in the accumulation of evidence, that it is "following no cunningly devised fables"—no plausible phantasies—to profess faith in the entire system of revelations vouchsafed to Emanuel Swedenborg. The reply to objections has precluded the affirmative expansion of the argument. But I trust a service has been performed to the cause of truth by disabusing some minds of disparaging conceptions of a "good man and true," and of the genuine character of his doctrines. I do not say, for I do not believe, that these impressions, so far as they are referable to the Lecturer in question, have arisen from the least intention, on the part of the Lecturer, to detract, in the public mind, from a high estimate of a man whom he, I doubt not, unfeignedly honors and respects; and by whose spirit, because he has come sufficiently near to it in many points to appreciate it, his own is reverently awed, notwithstanding all the abatements he makes from his claims. Still the very earnestness of his eulogy gives effect to the tenor of his exceptions, and it is this effect which I would fain counteract by the present feeble attempt to show, that the objections which he urges are urged from a moral position which, unhappily as I think, prompts him to arraign in Swedenborg errors and delusions which belong not exclusively to him, but which in Mr. E.'s secret estimate pertain to all religion revealed in a written book.

## APPENDIX.

### CONCERNING THE LAST JUDGMENT.

(From the A. C., 2117—2122.)

**1.** Few at this day know what the last judgment is. It is supposed that it will come at the destruction of the world: and it is hence conjectured, that this terrestrial globe is to perish by fire, together with all things that exist in the visible world; and that then, for the first time, the dead shall rise again, and shall undergo their judgment; when the wicked are to be cast into hell, and the good to ascend into heaven. These conjectures are from the propheticals of the Word, where mention is made of a new heaven and a new earth, and also of the New Jerusalem; mankind not being aware, that the propheticals of the Word, in their internal sense, have a totally different signification from what appears in the literal sense; and that by heaven is not meant the heaven, nor by earth the earth, but the church of the Lord in general, and with every individual in particular.

**2.** By the last judgment is meant the last time of the church; and also, the last time of every one's life. To speak of it, first, as denoting *the last time of the church*: it was the last judgment of the Most Ancient Church, or that before the flood, when their posterity perished, whose destruction is described by the flood. It was the last judgment of the Ancient Church, or that after the flood, when almost all who were of that church became idolaters, and were dispersed. It was the last judgment of the representative church which succeeded among the posterity of Jacob, when the ten tribes were carried away into captivity, and dispersed amongst the nations; and afterwards when the Jews, after the coming of the Lord, were driven out of the land of Canaan, and scattered over the whole earth. The last judgment of the present church, which is called the Christian Church, is what is meant, in the Revelation of John, by the new heaven and the new earth.

**3.** That *the last time of the life of every man*, when he dies, is to him the last judgment, is not unknown to some, but still few believe it. Nevertheless it is a constant truth, that every man rises again after death into another life, and stands before the judgment. This judgment is thus accomplished. As soon as his corporeal organs grow cold, which takes place after a few days, he is raised again of the Lord by celestial angels, who at first are attendant on him; but when he is such that he cannot remain with them, he is then received by spiritual angels; and successively afterwards by good spirits. For all whatever, that come into the other life, are welcome guests who meet a kind reception. But as every one's desires follow him, he who has led a wicked life cannot abide long with the angels and good spirits, but successively separates himself from them, and this until he comes among spirits whose life is similar and conformable to that which he had while in the world. It then appears to him as if he was in his bodily life, and, in fact, it is a continuation of his life. From this life his judgment commences. They who have led a wicked

life, in process of time descend into hell: they who have led a good life, are by degrees elevated by the Lord into heaven. Such is the last judgment of every person.

4. As to what the Lord spoke concerning the last times, saying that then the sea and the waves shall roar, the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, with several other particulars, Matt. xxiv. 7, 29; Luke xxi. 25; they all and singly signify the state of the church, in regard to what it would be at the time of its last judgment. By the sea and the waves roaring, nothing else is signified, than that heresies and controversies, in general within the church, and in particular in every individual, would be thus noisy and outrageous: by the sun nothing else is meant than love to the Lord and charity towards our neighbor; by the moon, faith; and by stars, the knowledges of faith; which in the last times would thus be darkened, would not give light, and would fall from heaven, that is, would vanish away. The like is said by the Lord in Isaiah, chap. xiii. 10. Also, by nation rising up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, nothing else is meant than evils against evils, and falses against falses, &c. There are reasons, replete with arcana, why the Lord thus spake. That seas, the sun, the moon, the stars, nations, and kingdoms, have such a signification, I know of a certainty; and it was shown in the First Part.

5. That the last judgment is at hand,\* cannot so plainly appear on earth, and within the church, as in the other life, whither all souls come and flock together. The world of spirits is at this day full of evil genii and evil spirits, chiefly from the Christian world; amongst whom there reign nothing but hatred, revenge, cruelty, and obscenity, of all kinds; and also treacherous machinations. Nor is this the case only with the world of spirits, whither souls recently deceased first go, but also with the interior sphere of that world, where are those who, as to their intentions and ends, had been inwardly wicked. This sphere, in like manner, is at this day so crowded, that I have wondered that such a multitude could ever exist. For all are not cast instantly into hell, because it is according to the laws of order, that every one who is of such a character should return into his own life which he had in the body, and should thence be let down into hell by degrees. The Lord casts none down into hell, but every one casts himself thither. Hence those worlds of spirits are thronged with the crowds of such spirits, who tarry there for a time. By these the souls who come from the world are cruelly infested: and, moreover, the spirits attendant upon man (for every man is governed of the Lord by spirits and angels) are more excited than heretofore to infuse into man malignant influences, and in fact to such a degree, that the attendant angels can scarce avert them, but are compelled to flow into man more remotely. Hence, in the other life, it may evidently appear, that the last time is at hand.

6. As to what further concerns souls recently arrived. They who come from the Christian world have scarce any other thought and purpose, than to become the greatest, and to possess all things, so entirely are they eaten up with the love of self and of the world; which loves are altogether opposite to

\* The reader will recollect, that this was published by our author in the year 1750. According to his later publications, the last judgment actually took place, or the chief operations belonging to it were performed, in the year 1757.

heavenly order, see n. 2057. Many, also, entertain no other than filthy, obscene, and profane thoughts, and discourse among themselves of nothing else : beside which, they make light of, and altogether despise, whatever is of charity and faith : the Lord they do not acknowledge, yea, they hold in hatred those who do profess him: for, in the other life, thoughts and hearts speak. Moreover, hereditary evils, arising from the wicked life of parents, are become more malignant ; and these, like fires hid and cherished inwardly, stimulate man to greater profanation than heretofore of all that is right and pious. Such spirits flock in troops at this day into the other life, and crowd the exterior and interior spheres of the world of spirits; as stated above. When evil begins thus to prevail, and the equilibrium to incline on that side, it is thence plainly perceived, that the last time is at hand, and that the equilibrium will soon be restored by the rejection of those who are within the church and the reception of others who are without.

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#### THINKING FROM ONE'S SELF.

(From the D. P., 287, 288, 293.)

**1.** *That the Divine Providence, not only with the good, but also with the evil, is universal in the most particular things ; and that still it is not in their evils.* It was shown above, that the Divine Providence is in the most particular things of the thoughts and affections of man ; by which it is understood that man can think and will nothing of himself ; but that all that he thinks and wills, and thence speaks and does, is from influx ; if it is good, from influx from heaven, and if evil, from influx from hell ; or, what is the same, that good is from influx from the Lord, and evil from the proprium of man. But I know that these things can hardly be comprehended, because a distinction is made between that which flows in from heaven or from the Lord, and that which flows in from hell or from the proprium of man ; and still it is said, that the Divine Providence is in the most particular things of the thoughts and affections of man, so far that man cannot think and will from himself: but because it is said, that he can also from hell, also from his proprium, it appears as contradictory, but still it is not. That no one can think from himself, but from the Lord, all the angels of heaven confess ; but that no one can think from any other than from himself, all the spirits of hell say : yet it has many times been shown to the latter, that not one of them thinks from himself, nor can, but that it flows in : but in vain ; they did not wish to receive it.

**2.** *When certain ones in the other life were convinced that no one thinks from himself, but from others, and that all others do not from themselves, but from influx through heaven from the Lord, they said in admiration, that thus they are not in fault if they do evil ; also, that thus it seems that evil is from the Lord ; as also, that they did not comprehend that the Lord alone could cause that all should think in such different manners.* Now because these three things cannot but flow into the thoughts with those who only think of effects from effects, and not of effects from causes, it is necessary that they should be taken up, and be disclosed from causes. *First : That thus they would not be in fault, that they do evil :* for if all that man thinks flows in from others, it seems

as if the fault was with those from whom it flows in : but still the fault itself is with him who receives, for he receives it as his own, nor does he know any other, nor wish to know any other ; for every one wishes to be his own, and to be led of himself, especially to think and will from himself ; for this is freedom itself, which appears as proprium, in which every man is ; wherefore if he knew that that which he thinks and wills flowed in from another, he would seem to himself as if bound and a captive, no longer at his own direction ; and thus all the delight of his life would perish, and at length the human itself. That it is so, I have often seen confirmed : it was given to some to perceive and feel that they were led by others ; they then burned with anger, till they became as if out of their right mind ; and they said that they would wish rather to be held bound in hell, than not to be permitted to think as they will, and to will as they think : that this is not permitted, they called being tied as to the life itself, which is harder and more intolerable than to be tied as to body : not to be permitted to speak and do as they think and will, they did not call being tied, because the delight of civil and moral life, which consists in speaking and doing, bridles it, and at the same time as it were mitigates it. Now because man does not wish to know that he is led by others to think, but wishes to think from himself, and also believes this, it follows that he is in fault, nor can reject it from himself, as long as he loves to think what he thinks : but if he does not love it, he releases himself from connection with them ; this is done when he knows that it is evil, and therefore wills to shun it and desist from it ; then also he is taken by the Lord from the society which is in that evil, and is transferred into a society in which it is not : but if he knows evil, and does not shun it, then the fault is imputed to him, and he becomes guilty of that evil. Whatever therefore man believes that he does from himself, is said to be done from man, and not from the Lord. *SECONDLY* : *That thus it seems, that evil is from the Lord* : this may be thought as a conclusion from the things which were shown above, but who cannot see that evil and falsity are not from good and truth, thus from the Lord, but from the subject and object receiving, which is in evil and falsity, and perverts and inverts it : as has also been fully shown above. But whence evil and falsity is with man, has been shown many times in the preceding pages. The experiment has also been made in the spiritual world with those who believed that the Lord could remove evils with the evil, and introduce goods in their place, and thus transfer the whole hell into heaven, and save all : but that this is impossible, will be seen at the end of this treatise, where instantaneous salvation and immediate mercy are to be discussed. *THIRDLY* : *That they do not comprehend, that the Lord alone can cause that all should think in so different a manner* : the divine love of the Lord is infinite, and His divine wisdom is infinite ; and infinite things of love and infinite things of wisdom proceed from the Lord, and these flow in with all in heaven, and thence with all in hell, and from both with all in the world ; wherefore it cannot be wanting to any one to think and will, for infinite things are infinitely all. Those infinite things which proceed from the Lord, not only flow in universally, but also most particularly ; for the Divine is universal from things the most particular ; and the most particular divine things are what is called the universal, as was shown above ; and the most particular divine is also infinite. From these things it may be evident, that the Lord alone makes every one think and will according to his quality, and according to the laws of His Providence.

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